

THE
Natural History
OF THE
~~Gulf of Mexico~~
ARBOR VITÆ

OR, THE
TREE of LIFE;
VERSIFY'D and EXPLAIN'D.

Addressed to the LADIES, by a MEMBER
of a SOCIETY of GARDENERS.

*Then be the TREE OF LIFE your Care,
And use it gently, as you're fair ;
Cherish the Plant with kindly Dew,
As it does often cherish You.*

Dedicat.

L O N D O N :

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TO THE
FAIR SEX.

LADIES,

TO You I take the Liberty
 T[']inscribe this *Nat[']ral History*;
 And hope you'll readily admit
 There's nothing in th' Address unfit.
 I don't to *Prelates* dedicate
 The Exercise of Arms compleat;
 Nor offer Tracts Divine to those
 Whose Business 'tis to *study Blows*;
 Nor am I so ridiculous
 To think of * *Members 'Lustrious*,
 Or t[']ask those venerable Dons
 Sagacious Opinions.
 I don't to th' *Artizan* present
 The Policy of Government;
 Nor to the *Statesman* (vain 'twould be!)
 A Treatise upon *Honesty*.

But

* 'Tis said this Piece was originally presented, with the usual Forms on such Occasions, to an honourable SOCIETY near Crane Court, in Fleet-street; who, we are inform'd, had gone half through it before they were aware of the Deception: Which proves, that That Address was ill adapted, and is a Justification of This; it being to a Sex, acknowledg'd the quickest of Apprehension, especially in Works of this Nature.

But so adapt my *Dedication*,
 As cannot fail of *Approbation* :
 For when the *Patron* and the *Matter*
 Resemble not, it is but *Satire*.

'Tis the Description of that *Tree*
 Which constitutes *Posterity*,
 And consequent gives *Life* to all
 The *Denizens* of this round *Ball*.
 You'll see, where'er 'tis found to grow,
 'Tis You its *Virtues* do bestow ;
 You are its *Cause*, its *Influence* ;
 You its *Perfections* do dispense.

Thus, as 'tis rais'd to *Life* by You,
 This *Work* of *nat'ral Right's* your *Due* ;
 And *Gratitude* demands likewise,
 That the *WHOLE SEX* should *patronise*.

Then be the *TREE OF LIFE* your *Care*,
 And use it gently, as you're fair ;
Cheerish the *Plant* with kindly *Dew*,
 As it does often *cherish* You.

I am,

With the most profound Admiration,

L A D I E S,

Your most eternally Devoted

Humble Servant.



A R B O R



ARBOR VITÆ.

CANTO I.

ARGUMENT.

*The Invocation that we make
Is merely done for Joking Sake.
Next the Description of the TREE ;
Where fam'd for most Activity,
And where of least Esteem, we paint,
With what's most noxious to this Plant.*

THOU God, to whose Great Memory
First May-Poles were erected high,
'Bout whose Circumf'rence, we are told,
Young frisky Lasses danc'd of old,
And oft in conscious Blushes spoke
That Emblem to have done the *Joke* ;

Assist me in the advent'rous Flight,
To paint the TREE OF LIFE aright :
Shou'd Pegasus disdain the Bit,
I'll mount upon thy stronger Tit.

The TREE OF LIFE, another Name
For P—n—s, but in Sense the same,

Is a rich Plant of balmy Juice,
 And own'd to be of sovereign Use,
 Consisting of one single Stem,
 That's straight, as is a *Pistillum*;
 Whose Top sometimes the Curious say
 Is like a *Cherry* seen in *May*;
 Or *Glandiform*—but's found to be
 More oft like *Nut* of *Filberd-Tree*.



Quite the Reverse of other Fruit,
 This grows, and dangles near the Root,
 Producing two of *Nutmeg* Kind,
 Twin-like, in one strong Purse confin'd,
 From which, as well as from the Root,
 Thick *capillary Tendrils* sprout.

This Tree, tho' fruitful, shoots but slow,
 And takes some Time to make it grow;
 Nor seeds to much Perfection,
 Before the fifteenth Year is run:
 When, come to good Maturity,
 The Fruits receive a strong Supply,
 And yield a viscous balmy Juice,
 Adapted to *VULVARIA*'s Use:
 That is, from Time to Time, it flows
 At the *Pistillum*, and bestows
 Itself, in chief, on th' open Cup
 O'th' *flow'ring Shrub*, which drinks it up,
 Spreading itself most commonly
 Beneath the Shade of this same Tree;
 Whose Parts, by Structure exquisite,
 Are fitted for imbibing it.

Th' ingenious *Bradley* says, hereby
 The Shrub commences Pregnancy,
 And therefore takes this Sap to be
 The fruitful making Flower o'th' Tree.
 Another learned Man, whose Name
 We cannot mention here for Shame,
 Does well observe, as may be found
 In's *History of Plants* renown'd,
 That there's the greatest Sympathy
 Between this little Shrub and Tree:

Their Natures are the same, says he,
 And in same Bed do best agree.
 Thus the *VULVARIA*'s prov'd by Art
 To be the other's Counter-part,
 And so it may with Property
 Be call'd, *Of Life, the Female Tree.*

All Climes this Plant produce, tho' some
 Thrive more, or less in Christendom,
 And do encrease to larger Size,
 As under more propitious Skies.
Nine Inches we can rarely boast
 In *England*, or *Eleven* at most;
 But when it does, 'tis fruitful *Kent*
 That shoots those *Inches* prominent.
 Whereas, upon *Hibernia*'s Plains,
Dimensions greater far it gains;
 So good withal, that Thousands there
 Subsist upon it all the Year;
 But when transplanted thence, how well
 It flourishes, I need not tell,
 Since single Plants have oft been known
 To raise good Houses in this Town.

As th' *Irish* Soil's esteem'd the best,
 Others are worse than all the rest;
 The very least and worst; for go
 Examine barren *Harborough*,
 Or *Sherard's* Forest, and your Sight
 Will meet with none of *midling* Plight.

The Stem is sensitive to th' Touch,
 But differs from all others much:
 They shrink from gentlest Lady's Hand,
 Which serves but more to make this stand, *

This

* I must beg leave to dissent from this Gentleman's general Observation. I have known some Stems not in the least affected by these gentle Squeezes: But then, perhaps, it may be said, that such Insensibility proceeds either from the Antiquity of the Lady, or the Stem's uncommon Frigidity, or from other bad Causes.

This, Sun-flow'r like, extends with Heat,
And Handling only makes it Great.

These Trees don't raise with Ease their Heads
In Winter, without good hot Beds;
In warmer Weather they can bear
To stand, expos'd to open Air.

On their Decline, they bow their Tops,
Grow flaccid, and shew want of Props,
For which some Gard'ners do apply
Your * *Birchen Twigs* as Remedy,
Which only makes them dwindle more
Than they were wont to do before.

Motteaux, fam'd for his Poetry,
As well as † *Largeness* of his TREE,
When 'twas reduced to this low State,
Us'd Means that might invigorate,
By tying it with *Hempen Cord*,
But no Relief did this afford;
For whether th' Bandage was too strait,
Or that it sunk with its own Weight,
Or that the Nature of the Line
Was too pernicious in the Twine,
His *Plant* its mortal Wound thereby
Receiv'd; which universally
Makes this Experiment decry'd
As too destructive to be try'd.

Some *Virtuosi* have pursued
A Practice that's by no Means good:
To answer modish Purposes,
They lop the ¶ *Nutmegs* from the TREES,

Which

* I should be glad to hear that this Discipline was entirely laid aside; and therefore recommend it to the Elder Sort of Botanists to begin the Reformation.

† 'Tis a great Pity so fine a Plant, as by all Relation *Mr. Motteaux's* was, should die so unnatural a Death; or that one Vegetable should be put to so base a Use as to strangle another.

¶ What a vast Difference there is between the Arbor Vitæ and all other Trees! They flourish the more for being
cas'd

(>)
Which seed no more, nor turgid grow,
Becoming good for little now,
Save making Whistles of for Sound,
With which this Country does abound ;
And are imported ev'ry Year
From *Italy*, and sell full dear.

Some other curious Gents, of late
Have try'd this Plant t'inoculate*
On *Medlar's* Stock, and for Manure
Use Man's unnatural Ordure.
But you this Method ever shun,
Who would not see your TREES undone :
For, let me tell you, as a Friend,
'Twill bring them all to an ill End.

Most People certainly allow
I'th' nat'ral Soil it's best to sow ;
That is, in hollow Places, near
Salt Water, issuing warm and clear,
Known in those *Tendrils* to abound,
Which shade the TREE itself around.
Howe'er some Caution may not be
Amis to th' young Fraternity
Of *Botanists*—And first, keep near,
And free from Filth the ARBOR's Seat ;
But above all, be sure take heed
Of what they call the † *Morpion* Breed.

This

eat'd of their Fruit ; but the Tree of Life and its Fruit
must be inseparable. The Fruit of the one is eatable, and
leaves the Stem in a Capacity of bearing more ; but the Fruit
of the other, after Amputation, is entirely useless, and the
Stem appropriated to the sorry Use of an Italian Whistle.
O England ! learn of the Italians to excel in their com-
mendable Arts, but for the poor Ladies Sake, imbibe not their
Principles of Botany.

* A Year or two ago, this Method of ingrafting was ve-
ry much in vogue in Holland, and the Operation performed
with great Dexterity ; till at length the Plant and the *Med-
lar* were both destroy'd.

† A Kind of Vermin resembling Crabs.

This noxious Insect's rear'd among
 The *Tendrils*, where 'twill sojourn long;
 And if in Time expel'd not thence,
 May prove of dang'rous Consequence.

Bowen, in *Simpling* excellent,
 Of no less Use, adds this Comment:
 Says he, the foul *VULVARIA* shun,
 Too oft mista'en for th' wholesome one,
 And which, if suffer'd near your Trees,
 Brings great and endless Damages.
 In Volume 12th of * *la Quintaine*,
 Largely abridg'd, he says again,
 That 'fore he had gain'd solid Sense,
 And purchas'd Dame Experience,
 Some of his Plants had suffer'd by
 Their growing, thro' Mistake, too nigh.
 That he had seen a thriving Tree,
 By Touch of foul *VULVARIA*,
 Dispoil'd of all its Energy;
 Grow scabby, warty, at the Root,
 And fungous, like wild Fig-tree's Fruit:
 In this Condition sad, the Juice
 Its Colour loses, and its Use.

The Tree too shares th' Infection,
 And taints each neighb'ring Region.

These ugly, loathsome Maladies,
 Which so effect such useful Trees,
 Have Ages exercis'd Mankind
 A proper Remedy to find,
 Few have succeeded worth a Pin,
 Except the famous *MISAUBIN*,
 Who, from his Skill profound, has writ
 A painful Work concerning it.

There

* I perceive Mr. Bowen is perfectly acquainted with the French——and having abridg'd *la Quintaine* (which signifies a thick Plank in the Ground to run a Tilt at) may very well instruct us in the Value of Experience, since he so dearly paid for it.

There he has taught a certain Cure
 For all the Ills these Plants endure;
 All that to Male and Female Tree
 Can fall, he cures infallibly;
 Nay, what's most wonderful, can make
 (For ev'ry ARBOR VITÆ's Sake)

The filthiest VULVARIA

As clean and sweet as Flow'rs in May.
 All which he does with great Success
 To those who seek from him Redress.

These venomous VULVARIÆ
 Spread wide in great Variety.
 Search but this spacious Town about,
 You'll find few Gardens it without.
 Travel St. James's Park around,
 There too in Plenty they abound;
 And in whole Shoals, but cast your Eye
 Upon the Gardens that do lie
 On t'other Side o'th' Thames—I call
 Not VAUX, but ROTTEN VULVA'S HALL.

The End of the First CANTO.

CANTO II.

ARGUMENT.

*The Names and Virtues next come under
Our Cognizance; but not to blunder,
By mixing them together, we
Will treat of either sep'ately.*

BESIDES the vulgar Name they give
Of TREE OF LIFE, if you'll believe
A certain learn'd Philosopher,
And great Divine, he does aver,
It rather should be call'd, The Tree
Of Good and Evil Quality;
For that this very self same Tree
Sprung up in Eden formerly,
Whose Fruit so tempted EVE, she cou'd
Not see, untouch'd, such precious Food.
Others will have its Name to be
What brought on RACHAEL's Pregnancy;
Viz. LEAH's Man-drake, whose kind Juice
Prov'd, in this Case, of sov'reign Use.

Th' ingenious Madam D'ACIER, who
In Theory this Plant well knew,
Calls it * *Nepenthe*; I affirm,
With her, there's not a better Term.
She gives strong Reasons why that Fruit
Truly belongs to this Tree's Root,

Which

* The Name of a certain Opiate.

Which the *Egyptian* Queen thought best
 For *Helen*, when dispos'd for Rest,
 To take against all Pain and Grief,
 And she would surely find Relief.

Fair *Helen* ever afterward
 To this same Plant paid great Regard.
 The precious Jewel she laid by,
 And worship'd as a Deity ;
 In Mind or Body, if she ail'd,
 This * *Panacea* never fail'd.

The Juice, when ta'en internally,
 Cures Sickness Green infallibly ;
 As soon as she th' Elixir tries,
 Strait vanish her Infirmities ;
 It proves a Grand Specif' — to all
 Disorders can the Fair befall.
 Tho' Tumours it may cause, which make
 The *Umbilical* Regions ach,
 A few short Months dispel them quite,
 And she's again in joyful Plight.

This sovereign, this golden Dose,
 This Quintessence of soft Repose,
 This Cordial, which revives the Heart,
 Diffuses Gladness thro' each Part,
 And softens so the savage Mind,
 It quits its Fierceness, and grows kind.
 This quiets Animosities,
 Unites the bitt'rest Enemies.
 All Ranks of Men experience
 It's most extensive Influence ;
 The King, the Beggar equally
 Partakes its healing Quality ;
 Whole States, and Empires too, confess
 This reconciling Plant no less.

Great BENTLEY, who's allow'd no Dunce,
 Denominates it more than once

Machina

* *An universal Medicine, good for all Diseases.*

Machina Herculis, and does pick,
 And cull, for Proof, quaint Fragments *Greek*,
 That of this Tree that Club was made,
 With which the Bully Hero's said
 T' have tam'd the fifty Daughters wild
 Of † *THESPIUS*, whom he got with Child.
 But soon, alas, his Club did dwindle!
 ♀ *OMPHALE* brought it to a Spindle.
 Others have thought th' *Hesperian* Trees,
 So fam'd of Old, were such as these.
 Besides, the Name that Bards bestow
 On Fruit, known on this Tree to grow,
 Of *Pomo Veneris*, proves plain
 This was the Apple that gave Pain;
 For which three Goddesses contended,
 And last in *BEAUTY*'s Favour ended.
 Indeed she had the strongest Claim,
 Who was most worthy of that Name.

We can but of its Virtues treat
 In Part; for all t'enumerate,
 As many Volumes scarce wou'd do
 To give to each its proper Due.
 The very rankest factious Jars,
 And most destructive bloody Wars
 Have terminated peaceably,
 By Dint of this great Remedy;
 A very Drop, when right apply'd,
 Cements Dissentions ne'er so wide.
 But hold—

This Theme no more enlarge upon,
 For fear we never shou'd have done.

In fine, who have a Mind to see
 This excellent and wond'rous Tree

In

† *King of Boeotia.*

♀ *Queen of Lydia.*

In full Perfection, growing now,
 Let 'em to BOWEN's * Garden go?
 And he'll not fail to gratify
 Their utmost Curiosity.
 He's always ready, as we're told,
 The various Rarities t'unfold,
 And calls it very waggishly,
 His *Envy'd Silver-Ladle-Tree*.

* Quere, *Whether Mr. Bowen's Tree is recover'd since
 he wrote his large Abridgment of La Quintaine?*

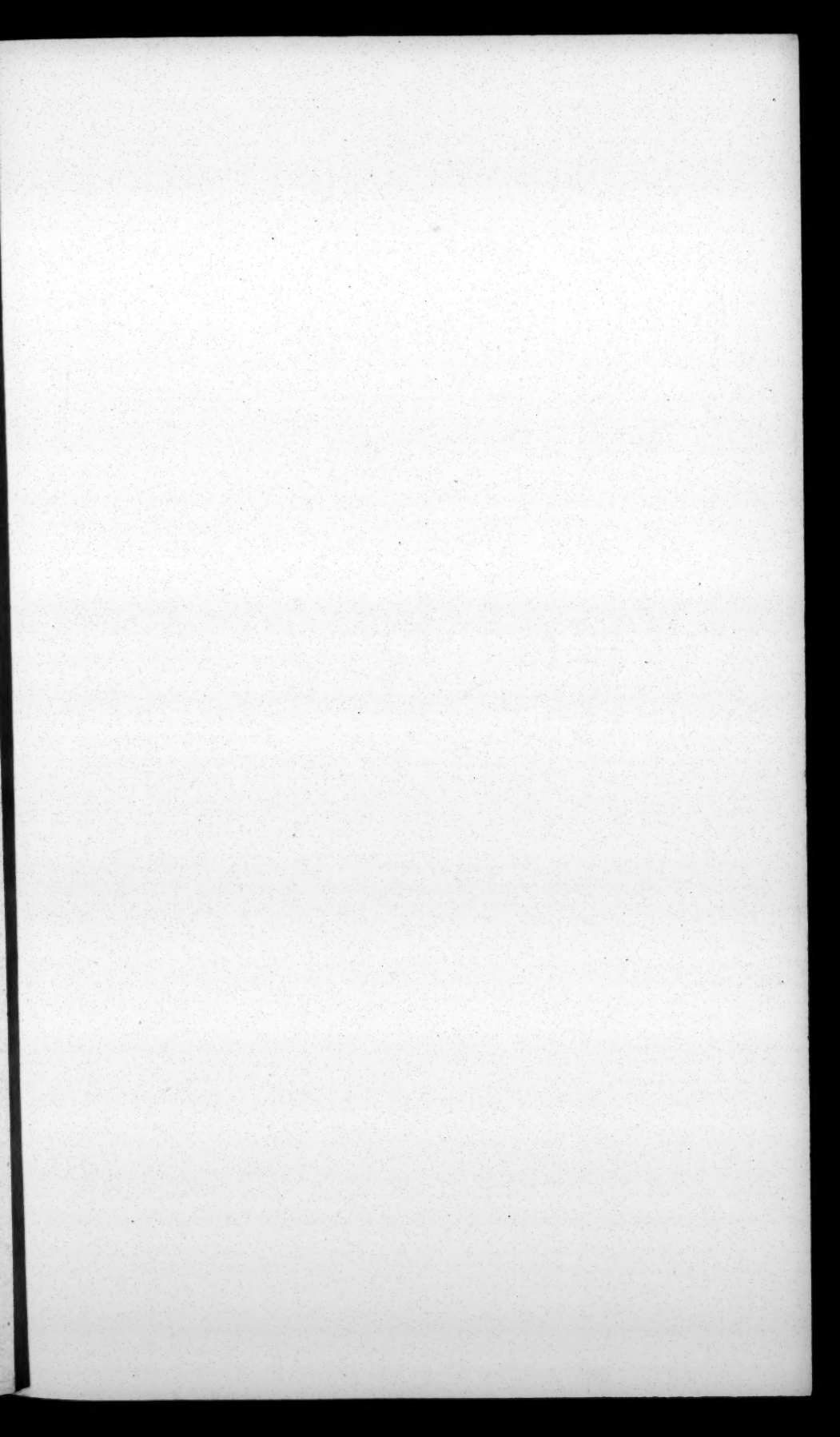
F I N I S.



(11)

In this condition, the king now
let him to know that the king
And he will not fail to grant
Their request. And the king
has always ready to do so.
The various kindnesses
And calls it very willingly.
His Majesty's command.





Cerr. HH5.